

ARIZONA *Our history* LATINA *Our story* TRAILBLAZERS

Stories of Courage, Hope & Determination

Trailblazer Series Vol VII





Elvira Espinoza Arizona Media Pioneer



A dedicated journalist and savvy businesswoman, Elvira Espinoza has shaped and produced Latino community publications for over 30 years in Arizona. She first blazed her trail in Mexico City, embarking on her editorial career at the age of 17 with the magazine *Última Moda*. Thirteen years later Elvira transitioned to life in Phoenix. In 1983, only one year after immigrating to Arizona, she and a partner developed and successfully published the *Unidos Magazine*. In a city with little Spanish language printed media available—and limited Spanish language broadcast media—Elvira saw a need and a business niche where she could contribute as a writer and editor. Over the next three decades she developed publications grounded in serious reporting and socially relevant content that appealed to immigrants as well as native-born Mexican Americans.

Born in 1954, Elvira grew up in Mexico

City. Her father is David Carrillo, a well-known political cartoonist. Her mother, Margarita Camarena Carrillo, was a bolero singer who passed away when Elvira was young. Upon high school graduation in 1969, Elvira attended college and landed her first job as Editorial Coordinator for the magazine *Última Moda*. She then moved into a position as the youngest National Editor of *Vanidades*, the largest circulated women's magazine in Mexico. In the mid-1970s, she gained further business experience as Director of Public Relations for newspaper publishing company Novedades.

By this time she had married and had two children, Valeria and Diego. The family briefly moved to Caborca, located in the Mexican state of Sonora, opening a print shop and publishing the *Caborca Gráfico* weekly newspaper. She and her family permanently immigrated to Phoenix in 1982. In a short time she forged into Arizona's publishing business, focusing



on the concept of community journalism with *Unidos Magazine*, which targeted the Mexican immigrant community.

In 1985, Elvira moved into a second venture, *Cambio Hispanic*, a bilingual magazine. This magazine reached further into the Latino community with a dual-language approach. It featured local news and advertising but also connected readers to resources linked to contemporary social and political concerns. Elvira and her partner also launched the Premios Cambios awards, presented to the best in local business, politics, and more.

By the 1990s, Elvira moved from magazine publishing into public relations. She established Ortiz & Espinoza, which assisted large companies like Motorola, Bank of America, and the Phoenix Convention & Visitors Bureau in marketing to the Latino community. By the early 2000s, she joined Ashland Media (later merged with Gannett/Arizona Republic) as its first Latina publisher. She oversaw the development of *TV y Más* magazine, *La Voz* newspaper, and Impact Communications. Elvira transformed the *TV y Más* magazine from a simple Spanish TV Guide to a broader, family-oriented magazine. Utilizing her community journalism approach,

Elvira kept *La Voz* going with articles and information on immigration, health, education, and other topics important to the Latino community.

In 2012, Elvira almost single-handedly wrote and edited the bilingual Arizona Centennial publication, *100 Years of Mexican-American Influence*, celebrating Arizona's rich and diverse Latino history. Created through *La Voz/Arizona Republic*, this well-researched publication made its way into libraries, archives, schools and homes of community members. This publication featured well-known Latino personalities as well as everyday individuals who contributed to the community's history.

Recently, Elvira stepped down from her position with *La Voz* and began a new venture with her current husband Tommy Espinoza called *Mixed Voces.com*. This bilingual online publication provides information about Raza Development Fund programming, as well as features about local culture, events, sports, social issues and more.

Elvira has earned much recognition throughout her career, including the Exemplary Leadership award from La Alma de la Gente, and is the only Latina to be honored in the Arizona Newspapers Association's Hall of Fame.

The Raul H. Castro Institute (RCI) is proud to have a role in preserving the significant contributions made by the 2015 Arizona Latina Trailblazers. This vision of the the Raul H. Castro Institute is to improve the quality of life for the Latino community in Arizona by bringing focus to priority issues of education, health and human services, leadership, and civic engagement – all areas in which these Latina Trailblazers have created a tremendous and lasting impact. Through the use of this book in educational settings and through its availability as part of the Arizona Memory Project, their legacy will be perpetuated as generations of leaders continue to be inspired by the spirit and actions of these pioneering women. It has been a privilege to tell their stories.

To learn more about the lives and achievements of the 2015 Arizona Latina Trailblazers, please visit

www.azlatinatrailblazers.com

All rights reserved, including the right of reproduction in whole or in part in any form. The publishers grant permission to individual teachers to reproduce the contents of this book for educational purposes and classroom use. Limit of Liability/ Disclaimer of Warranty: While the author and the publishers have used their best efforts in preparing this publication, they make no representations or warranties with respect to the accuracy or completeness of its contents and specifically disclaim any intent to defame or slight any people, places or organizations.

Published by Raul H. Castro Institute of Phoenix College
Printed in the United States of America
Copyright © 2015

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Oral histories written by Jean Reynolds, Historian
Video production by SRP
Design by Alfredo Hernandez, Phoenix College
Editing by Jean Reynolds, Michelle Klinger, Megan Martin, Phoenix College

Volume VII of the Trailblazers Series is dedicated to the memory and life-long contributions of former Arizona Governor Raul H. Castro, 1916 - 2015.

The Raul H. Castro Institute acknowledges the support of APS, Univision Arizona, and Lacey & Larkin Frontera Fund to this important project.

Thank you to the premier sponsor for making this project possible:



Latinas' Stories Remain Important in Arizona's History

As educators, social workers, labor leaders, entrepreneurs, scholars, judicial representatives, homemakers, nurses, ranch wives, or political representatives, Latinas and Hispanas have long been at the forefront of Arizona's history. It is important that we recognize the impact of their individual contributions, and imperative that their collective stories be recalled and shared.

The life journeys of these women are filled with compelling stories that reflect the strength of their vision, their courageous actions, and their thoughtful advocacy. Their outstanding leadership formed strong cultural cornerstones, laying the foundation for women in leadership roles today.

And so we honor them and all that they represent, pioneers who forged our rich cultural heritage and strong role models.



Presented by



RAUL H. CASTRO
INSTITUTE OF
PHOENIX
COLLEGE

Premier Sponsor



Delivering more than power.™